

REMARKS

Claims 1-29 are pending. Claim 1 is amended.

The rejection of claims 1-2 and 6-29 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Schauer (US Pub 2002/0145592) and Nishikawa et al. EP Patent No. 1 014 295 A2 is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 recites in part a guidance device provided on the input surface and extending along a predetermined track for guiding hand-writing strokes to follow the predetermined track. The predetermined track includes a plurality of stroke segments arranged for receiving hand-writing strokes to generate the input characters. The plurality of stroke segments include a plurality of horizontal stroke segments vertical stroke segments, and diagonal stroke segments. The guidance device further includes a closed edge surface formed about an entire outer perimeter of the predetermined track, and the guidance device includes a plurality of interior projections spaced inward from the closed edge surface for guiding the hand-writing strokes to follow the predetermined track. The closed edge surface and the plurality of interior projections identify an absolute position of the hand-writing strokes within the predetermined track.

Schauer fails to describe a guidance device extending along a predetermined track for guiding hand-writing strokes to follow the predetermined track. Schauer describes a device where a user draws characters freely over regions without the aid of guidance utilizing a predetermined track. A guidance device is neither described nor suggested in Schauer.

Nishikawa fails to overcome the deficiencies of Schauer. Nishikawa describes a touch operation guide shape formed on a input device for assisting a driver to locate discrete touch switches in an array of touch switches. None of the embodiments in Nishikawa show or describe a combination of diagonal, horizontal, and vertical stroke segments for guiding a user's finger for generating hand-writing strokes to form input

characters. Nishikawa further fails to describe a closed edge surface formed about an entire perimeter of a predetermined track. In the present invention, the configuration of the predetermined track formed by the closed edge surface and the interior projections spaced inward from the closed edge surface identifies an absolute position to the user without the user having to look at the surface of the input device. In contrast, in Nishikawa, the grooves do not provide an absolute position for a user. Although the grooves provide some guidance to avoid activating a switch while transitioning a user's finger through the grooves, the grooves as configured require the user to frequently look at the grid to see the location of the user's finger. As a result, Schauer and Nishikawa fail, individually and in combination, to describe or suggest the limitations of claim 1. Therefore, claim 1 is allowable.

Claims 2-29 depend from claim 1 and are therefore allowable.

In view of the foregoing amendment and remarks, the pending claims are now in condition for allowance. Favorable action is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: 7/16/2010

/Frank L. Lollo/
Frank L. Lollo
Reg. No. 48,854

MacMillan, Sobanski & Todd, LLC
One Maritime Plaza, Fifth Floor
720 Water Street
Toledo, Ohio 43604
Tel: 734-542-0900
Fax: 734-542-9569